

FDP HERALD

Fellowship of the Order of Dionysis and Paul Newsletter

Jonah 1:17 - 2:6

Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Then Jonah prayed to the Lord his God from the fish's belly. And he said:

*"I cried out to the Lord because of my affliction,
And He answered me
Out of the belly of Sheol I cried,
And You heard my voice.
For You cast me into the deep,
Into the heart of the seas,
And the floods surrounded me;
All your billows and waves
passed over me.
Then I said, "I have been cast out
of Your sight; Yet I will look again
toward Your holy temple."
The waters surrounded me, even
to my soul;
The deep closed around me;
Weeds were wrapped around my
head. I went down to the
moorings of the mountains;
The earth with its bars closed
behind me forever;
Yet You have brought up my life
from the pit,
O Lord, my God*

[Meditation & Daily Office Link](#)



Mary Magdalene & Deborah

Mary Magdalene was said to be a fallen woman, out of whom Jesus cast seven demons. Her name derives from the place in which she came from - Magadan / Magdala, which in Greek and Hebrew means Tower, Fortress or Elevation.

The tarot card 'The Tower' has often been associated with the biblical Tower of Babel, and as such became known as the 'The Maison Dieu' (House of God) or 'Le Feu du Ciel' (Fire from the Sky). This in itself has given this particular card a rather ominous reputation. However there are one or two who have a different position on what 'The Tower' may represent. Some early references indicate that the name itself is a mistranslation, in that the 'House' being struck by lightning is not that of Babel or of God, but that of the devil. Indicating the Harrowing of Hell. The Christ's descent into Hades and the breaking open of the gates and the forgiveness of Sins.

Perhaps Mary Magdalene is the character falling from the Tower, or perhaps being released from it. Could she be the original Damsel in distress in a Towerly prison?

Another female character that may be of interest in this strange mix is Deborah, a prophetess of Israel. (Judges 4:4-16).

Her name derives from the hebrew meaning 'Bee' - and she is said to represent judgment based on spiritual discrimination.

"Deborah dwelt under the palm tree of Deborah, between Ramah (Height/Elevation) and Beth-el (House of God)".

Some early pictures of the Tower actually feature a shepherd using a tree for shelter in a storm - The card being called 'La Foudre' (Lightning). Interestingly Deborah also means leader of the flock, and she conquered a great general; Sisera (meaning: ready for war) who possessed 900 Chariots made of Iron, and She did this with the help of her General Barrack, which means Lightning. ABJ

Death for Drinking Water

Because she got a drink of water from a "Muslim well," Asayiya Noreen "Asia" Bibi has been jailed for five years and is awaiting her execution in Pakistan.

The 50-year-old Christian mother of three was picking phalsa berries under the blistering sun when her thirst compelled her to find water at a nearby well. A bitter Muslim neighbor charged that she "contaminated" the entire "Muslim well" of water by dipping her cup in for refreshment. After her "infraction" in 2009, Bibi determined to defend her faith, something her Christian parents argued against because religious minorities do not fare well in Pakistan, which is 97 percent Muslim. When Bibi was confronted at the well by other women challenging her faith, she said:

"I'm not going to convert. I believe in my religion and in Jesus Christ, who died on the cross for the sins of mankind."

She recounted in her memoir about the incident, Blasphemy, which was dictated to her husband and then carried out of Pakistan by a French journalist.

"What did your Prophet Mohammed ever do to save mankind? And why should it be me that converts instead of you?" she asked. These words riled the other women at the well, who spat on her and beat her and stole her phalsa berries. They hurled venomous charges: "You're just a filthy Christian! You've contaminated our water and now you dare speak for the Prophet! Stupid b____, your Jesus didn't even have a proper father – he was a bastard, don't you know that?"

Their confrontation offers a striking contrast to Jesus offering Living Water to the woman at the well. Five days later, Bibi was picking in another field near her village in Central Pakistan when a mob approached shouting "Death! Death to the Christian!"

**Christian post*

Lectionary Readings

14 Feb	Romans 10 : 8 - 13	Luke 4 : 1 - 13
21 Feb	Phil 3 : 17 - 4:1	Luke 9 : 28 - 43
28 Feb	1 Cor 10 : 1 - 13	Luke 13 : 1 - 9
6 Mar	2 Cor 5 : 16 - 21	Luke 15 : 1 - 32
13 Mar	Phil 3 : 4 - 14	John 12 : 1 - 8

The Ash Wednesday Poem

My Brother, My Sister
 How have we forgot one another
 Bleak these times past
 Wallowing in doubt and discord
 The material world grips like a vice
 Ever squeezing the fruit of life
 Down into the darkened pool that once was golden
 Now swirling with discontent and falsehood
 The Tower of 7 Windows closes in
 With ominous threat or hope
 Take a leap and trust oh dearest ones
 We may be not as we once were
 Yet we builders and architects are
 Were we struck down into the pit
 Or was the Lightning a harrowing of the gates
 So setting us on a path of unseen light
 So seeming we have strayed
 Wasting our substance as poorly sown seed
 The weeds grow fast
 Oh how the weeds grow fast.
 We are as one body
 Every organ alone and a mystery
 Yet in unison we are mighty
 The Heart should beat True
 O'er flowing with Love
 My Brother, My Sister
 Be not Fallen
 Be as maidens
 Prepare thy house
 Light thy lamps
 And make ready.

B.J.

Symbolism of the Altar

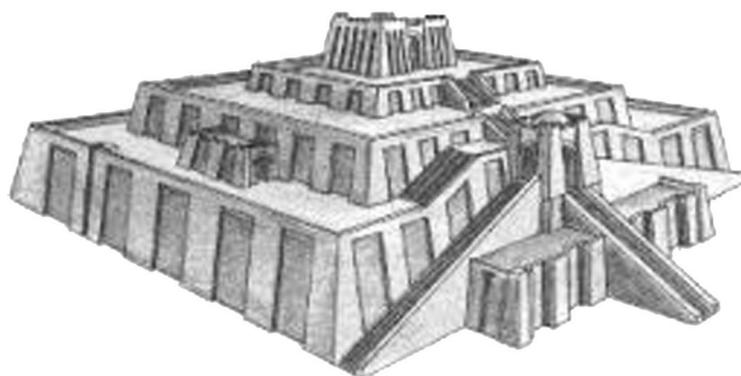
The symbolism of the altar rests upon the understanding of the nature of sacrifice. In traditional terms a sacrifice was the offering to a deity of something of real value, such as food, a precious object, or the life of an animal. Such an offering may be an act of devotion, or an act of appeasement. In either case the sense of giving something of personal value is implicit.

The altar is that place in our soul we call the heart. It is the central point of our being around which our consciousness gravitates. For many of us it is obscured by the thoughts, feelings and images that fill our minds. Nevertheless, it is there, the centre of our being, and upon it burns the divine flame of life that we associate with all things spiritual, including our understanding of God. From it we draw our strength and to it we offer our produce.

In the ancient world a 'blood-sacrifice' consisted of a living creature, whose life was offered to a deity by the supplicant. Alternatively a 'bloodless sacrifice' could be the offering of a part of one's produce, such as grain, oil, wine or money, for example. A sacrifice may also consist of the dedication of personal time to a worthy cause, or in the practice of Asceticism where individuals may surrender worldly benefits to follow a spiritual ideal.

In metaphorical terms the 'blood-sacrifice' might be the offering of personal characteristics and passions, such as avarice, lust and anger upon the altar of abstinence; whereas, the 'bloodless-sacrifice' might consist of good deeds offered to the divine upon the altar of Charity. All may be seen as expressions of the one altar at the centre of our being.

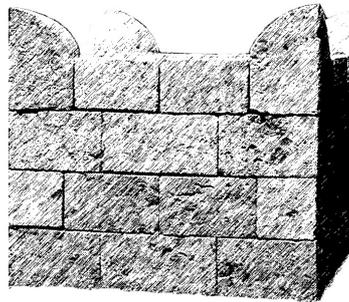
In ancient times altars constructed of stone or mounds of earth were frequently located in the open, at the summit of high places such as hills and mountains. Such sites were generally considered to be spiritually dynamic and set aside as being holy and or sacred. The Mesopotamian Ziggurat clearly reflects this principle. It should be noted that the altar is located in the small temple building at the summit of the ziggurat illustrated below.



This concept of an 'elevated place' was often employed in the construction of traditional temples, churches and places of worship, where the altar was placed on a raised area at the summit of a few steps. The altar was invariably the focal point of most liturgical rites and ceremonies.



In the ancient world many different material were used in the construction of an altar, including stone, wood, bronze, and other rare and precious metals. However, in the early Christian Church altars were generally made of wood, although stone was employed where appropriate. This changed as the fortunes of the Church improved during in the second half of the first millennium when many costly materials were employed in the construction of churches and their altars.



Altar of Burnt Offerings

Some altars were used for the sacrifice of living victims, such as the altar of burnt offerings that stood outside of the Temple in the Court of the Priests. On this altar animal and bird sacrifices were offered.



In many cultures many altars were, and are still used for the offering of gifts of produce such as flowers, fruit, milk, honey, oil, beer, wine and water. Frequently such altars carry a likeness in the form of a statue or a painting of the deity to which the temple or sanctuary is dedicated, and towards which the devotee faces when engaging in prayer. A.A.

Submissions Please

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